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ABSTRACT

The Primary Trait System (PTS) of scoring was devised by the National Assessment of Educational Progress to score large numbers of natural writing samples. Essentially, PTS permits evaluation of writing in an objective way, but one that does not rely on scoring surface features such as mechanics, grammar, or spelling. While the assessment value of PTS is clear, its instructional merits have remained largely unstudied. With this in mind, a study was conducted to describe the instructional uses made of the principles of PTS by 11 elementary and secondary school teachers. The teachers participated in a five-day workshop in which PTS was described theoretically. They also were given practice in using scoring guides related to PTS assignments and time to develop or adapt assignments of their own. Back in their classrooms, the teachers kept activity logs on the assignments they used. They also participated in two "booster" workshops during the period studied. The teachers used PTS in their classrooms in a variety of ways, including the following: (1) to clarify lesson objectives, (2) to provide a way to formulate assignments, (3) to help students evaluate and respond to the writing of peers, (4) to assess students' papers, and (5) to improve reading. (FL)

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Purpose and Audience in Writing: A Study of Uses of the Primary Trait System in Writing Instruction

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Abstract

The Primary Trait System (PTS) was devised by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in order to score large numbers of natural writing samples. Essentially, PTS seeks to judge the writer's ability to achieve the purpose of his/her writing, whether the purpose is expressive, explanatory, or persuasive.

The Writing Research and Resources Project at CEMREL was interested in finding out what pedagogical uses PTS might serve, apart from the obvious one of providing a means to assess students' writing. Therefore, project staff in collaboration with 11 teachers devised the study reported here. It is important for the reader to realize that the primary goal of the study was a descriptive one: What uses of PTS would teachers discover in their classrooms?

In varying numbers, teachers reported the following uses:

- o PTS helped clarify the objectives of the lesson;
- o PTS provided a way to formulate assignments;
- o PTS provided a means to analyze and to respond to students' writings;
- o PTS helped students evaluate and respond to the writing of peers;
- o PTS provided a means for assessing students' papers; and
- o PTS affected students' background reading ability.

Background

In the last few years, teachers of composition have been urged by researchers and theoreticians to adopt a "process" approach, emphasizing how students write as opposed to emphasizing the product. The National Assessment of Educational Programs (NAEP) developed the Primary Trait System of Scoring which was designed to permit evaluation of writing

in an objective way but which does not rely on scoring surface features such as mechanics, grammar, spelling, etc.

While the assessment value of PTS is clear, the instructional merits of the system have gone largely unstudied, although several writers (Lloyd-Jones, 1977; Klaus, 1982; and Spandel, 1981) imply that teachers can adapt the principals of PTS for instructional use.

The Problem

The obvious difficulty with the PTS for instructional use is the development of a workable curriculum of primary traits. Despite the interest in PTS, theorists and researchers have not been able to develop a list of traits which are "acceptable" as embodying the principles of PTS theory. Indeed, although PTS has been used for district-wide evaluation of students' writing skills, the exercises used are commonly those created and used by NAEP. Discussions in the literature of PTS also confine themselves to the same four or five commonly accepted primary traits and to the same situations. That is, the persuasive exercise is commonly a letter to an authority figure advocating a change or defending the status quo through rational argument. The primary trait list envisioned by Lloyd-Jones (1977) has yet to be discovered.

Theoretical Framework

Until fairly recently, most style handbooks have paid attention to modes of discourse: narration, description, exposition, and argumentation. In 1971, Kinneavy published A Theory of Discourse in which he argued that purpose is all. "The aim of discourse determines everything else in the process of discourse." For Kinneavy, modes are important only as the means for accomplishing a given purpose. He suggests that a theory

of language and a theory of discourse would be "crowned" by a framework of purposes of language. He identifies four major purposes:

1. Reference discourse: this includes scientific, explanatory, and informative discourse and is intended to "designate or reproduce reality." It is characterized by concern for factuality, comprehensiveness, and careful use of inductive and deductive reasoning. It focuses on the subject at hand.

2. Persuasive discourse: this is intended to induce the audience to choose or to prompt the reader to action. The focus is on the audience.

3. Expressive discourse: this articulates the writer's personality or point of view. Its focus is on the writer.

4. Literary discourse: this attempts to create a language structure worthy of appreciation in its own right.

For Kinneavy, different purposes entail different thought processes, and result in pieces of discourse which have distinctive stylistic features and organizational patterns. Skill in accomplishing one purpose does not imply skill in accomplishing other purposes. One may be able to write a good project report, but fail to write persuasive letters.

In addition to purpose, current discourse theorists have tried to elucidate the importance of audience on the writer's use of language. This is not a new concern. Aristotle talks about the requisites of persuasion: establishing a plausible ethos, creating a desired attitude in the audience, and demonstrating the truth--real or apparent--of the arguments. Nevertheless, audience has received new attention from discourse theorists. Moffett (1968) describes the relationship between writer and audience using a metaphor of physical space.

In the interior monologue, writer and audience are identical; there is no separation. Dialogue separates the two, although they're still close. Finally one writes to an audience which is both large and absent. At this extreme, the writer receives no feedback from the audience.

Moffett (1968) describes how changes in the speaker-subject-audience relationships parallel changes in intellectual development but he rejects the notion that any one relationship is more important than any other.

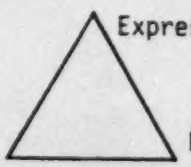
Primary Trait System

The preceding discussion provides a background for understanding Lloyd-Jones' work in PTS (1977). Lloyd-Jones begins by defining "writing" as "discourse," which he discusses in terms of its aims, which relate to the functions of language, and in terms of its features, which are the separate elements, devices, and mechanisms of language. Judgements about the quality of writing, he says, are primarily related to its aims. Yet to be informative about those judgements, one must be able to describe the writing in terms of its features. He then differentiates two kinds of holistic tests. It is the second kind that concerns us. PTS, he says, "isolates subcategories of the universe of discourse and rates writing samples in terms of their aptness within the prescribed range." PTS "is potentially more informative," he concludes.

Lloyd-Jones et al. devised the primary traits a posteriori:

> "Perhaps in an ideal world of brilliant rhetoricians one would know in advance the features which would define a 2 or a 4 paper, but we took papers gathered in trial runs, examined them carefully to see what features actually were chosen to solve the rhetorical problem, and then wrote the descriptions to conform with the expectations established by the sample. Usually we found many quite legitimate solutions which we had not imagined."

To help categorize the writings at which they looked, Lloyd-Jones and his colleagues developed a triangular model, based largely on Kinneavy's purposes of discourse:



From this categorization of purpose, Lloyd Jones et al. developed writing tasks which, they hoped, would elicit a primary trait associated with purpose and audience. Examples of such traits and assignments reported in Klaus (1981, 1982) include:

1. Sometimes people write just for the fun of it. This is a chance for you to have some fun writing.

   Pretend that you are a pair of tennis shoes. You've done all kinds of things with your owner in all kinds of weather. Now you are being picked up again by your owner. Tell what you, as the tennis shoes, think about what's going to happen to you. Tell us how you feel about your owner.

   Purpose: Expressive
   Primary Trait: Expression of feeling through elaboration of a role.

2. One of the things you do in school is to write reports for science, social studies, and other subjects. Imagine that you are going to write a report about the moon for your science class.

   In the box below are some facts about the moon which you can use in your report. You may also add other facts that you remember about the moon from your reading and classroom, from television, or from listening to people.

   Write your report as you would tell it to your class. Space is provided on the next three pages. Be sure to report the facts in an order that will be clear and that will make sense to your classmates.

FACTS ABOUT THE MOON
made of rock mountainous, contains craters covered with dust no air or water no plant or animal life

   Purpose: Explanation
   Primary Trait: Explanation through significant ordering of details.

3. Imagine that your principal asked for suggestions about how to make things better in your school. Write a letter to your principal telling him just ONE thing you think should be changed,

how to bring about the change, and how the school will be improved by it. Space is provided below and on the next two pages. Sign your letter "Chris Johnson."

Purpose: Persuasion
Primary Trait: Persuasion through invention of arguments and appeals appropriate to a particular audience and situation.

In addition to the assignment, a four-point scale, called a scoring guide, was developed for each exercise. The definition of each score point described the degree to which the primary trait is apparent in the students' paper. Typically, points were neither given nor withheld because of flaws of grammar or mechanics, although, in fact, NAEP often considered these as "secondary traits" and assessed them as well. A typical scoring guide is reproduced below:

1. NO ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ROLE OF TENNIS SHOES. Student compositions assigned to this category lack the fundamental element of the primary trait; that is, they do not show evidence of a clearly established entry into the imaginary role of tennis shoes. Some of these writings are marked by a tendency to write <u>about</u> tennis shoes, or <u>about</u> tennis, or about other related activities. They are, in effect, limited to observation and do not achieve participation in the role. Other writings that would be assigned to category 1 might imply or project a role that cannot be definitely established as that of the tennis shoes. These compositions may be so vague that they do not contain any details that are applicable either to the role of tennis shoes or to the status of having an owner, or they may contain details that are inconsistent with the role of tennis shoes or with the status of having an owner.

2. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ROLE OF TENNIS SHOES. Writings assigned to this category explicitly or implicitly establish the role of tennis shoes, but the elaboration is insufficient to endow the role with a distinctive personality or relationship to the owner. Some of these compositions, for example, simply report shared experiences with the owner without implying or directly expressing any feelings about the experiences of the owner. Others express feelings with little or no reference to particular experiences to account for the feelings, and still others report contradictory feelings or experiences and thus project an inconsistent personality or relationship to the owner. All such writings would be assigned to category 2.

3. CLEAR ELABORATION OF THE ROLE OF TENNIS SHOES. Compositions in this category not only establish the role of tennis shoes, but also elaborate the role with details sufficient to endow it with a clearly identifiable character, personality, or relationship to the owner. Although successful in clearly elaborating the role, these compositions contain passages of irrelevant details, of mere reportage lacking in expressive purpose, of highly generalized reportage, or brief changes and shifts away from the dominant personality or relationship to the owner. Overall, writings in this category are less consistent, concrete, or appropriate in elaboration that category 4 papers.

4. VIVID AND CONSISTENT ELABORATION OF THE ROLE OF TENNIS SHOES. Student writings assigned to this category consistently elaborate the role with vivid details that project a distinct personality and relationship to the owner. Often highly inventive, these compositions are for the most part very carefully elaborated and they contain few, if any, lapses or irrelevancies in detail.

Methodology

Objectives

The primary objective of our study was to describe instructional uses which teachers made of the principles of PTS. In addition to this objective, we also wanted to find out what purposes for writing teachers would focus on.

Eleven teachers from inner-city and suburban districts participated in our study. The distribution of teachers by grade levels is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Grade Level Distribution of Teachers

Grade Level	Number of Teachers
2/3*	1
4	1
4/5*	1
5/6*	1
6	1
6/7*	1
7	2
8	2
11/12*	1

*Class split across two grade levels.

Procedures

In June, a five-day workshop was conducted for the teachers. At the workshop, PTS was described theoretically and teachers were given practice in using scoring guides related to "traditional" PTS assignments. Time was given to developing or adapting new assignments which were then critiqued by the group.

Following this workshop, no contact occurred with the teachers until the beginning of the fall school term. Project staff then sent out a letter of instructions for teachers to use when completing the class activity log which would show the assignment presented in class and the activities undertaken. Periodically throughout the first 12 weeks of the term, project staff observed each participating class and interviewed each teacher.

Finally, two "booster" workshops were conducted (one in September and one in October) to allow staff and teachers to meet for discussion of progress and problems.

Findings

Before discussing the specific uses to which teachers applied PTS, some discussions of the assignments they created will be helpful. In this discussion, each teacher has been given a letter for identification while specific assignments received an identification number. For example, Table 2 shows that all teachers, except teacher B, used the NAEP-developed "Tennis Shoes" assignment, which is coded #1.

Table 2: Grade Level by Assignment

Teacher	Grade Taught	Assignment Number
A	2/3	1, 10, 11
B	4	27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 41
D	4/5	1, 4
C	5/6	1, 2, 3
F	6	1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12-17
E	6/7	1
I	7	1, 33, 34, 35
G	7	1, 19, 24, 25, 26
J	8	1, 19, 21, 22, 23
H	8	1, 18, 19, 20
K	11/12	1, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40

Table 2 shows for what grade level each assignment was intended. It would also appear to indicate that grade level had little to do with whether or not PTS was tried. In the case of one sixth grade teacher, exercises 12-17 are listed as a block rather than each separately because they were all on the same general topic and students had the option of choosing which of the assignments they wished to do.

Table 3: Category of Mode/Assignment

Expressive	Explanatory	Persuasive	?
1		2	
4		3	
5			
6			
7			
9	8	10	
12	11		13
	14		
16	15		
18	17		
19			
20	21		
23	22		
25	24		
	26		
28	27		
29			
30			
31	31		
	32		33
	34		35
36	36		
	38	37	
39		40	
	41		

Table 3 classifies assignments by mode (expressive, explanatory, and persuasive) and reveals that expressive and explanatory modes were about equally used, with the persuasive mode getting much less attention. A third indication of Table 3 is that some assignments were difficult to categorize, either because the language of the assignment was not specific or because the assignment seemed a combination of modes ("Pretend you are _____ and explain _____").

Table 4: Mode by Grade Level

Grade Level	Mode/Assignment Number			
	Expressive	Explanatory	Persuasive	?
2/3	1	11	10	
4	28, 29, 30, 31	27, 31, 32, 41		
4/5	1, 4			
5/6	1		2, 3	
6	1, 5, 6, 7, 9, 12, 16	8, 14, 15, 17		13
6/7	1			
7	1, 19, 25	24, 26, 34		33, 35
8	1, 18, 19, 20, 23	21, 22		
11/12	1, 36, 39	36, 38	37, 40	

Table 4 shows mode of assignment by grade level. Again, the striking fact is the minimal use of the persuasive mode which was used once at grade 2/3, twice at 5/6, and twice at 11/12. The sample is surely too small and the data collection period too brief to conclude that persuasive writing is used more at any particular grade level; indeed, the data do not indicate that. We speculate that the apparent neglect of persuasive writing in favor of the other modes may be a widepsread situation in writing classrooms, since the sample of teachers in this project is probably as likely, if not more so, to teach all modes than are teachers generally. The hign school teacher in the project, a veteran of 17 years of teaching, reports that one of her great discoveries during the study is that she has taught little persuasive writing in the past and was not able spontaneously to present to her students a repertoire of rhetorical and stylistic strategies useful for persuasive writing, which she could readily do for expressive and explanatory modes. She wonders, in one of her journal entries during the project, how generally that is true of other writing teachers.

An examination of the assignments shows that the purpose and/or primary trait of the assignment is explicitly stated less than half of the time, although it is nearly always implicit. When the purpose is explanation or persuasion, the language is likely to include words like "explain," "describe," "persuade," and "convince" whereas it often seems superflous to use the word "express" in pieces where the purpose is expression. Where scoring guides are provided, purpose is nearly always present in a statement of the primary trait. Some of the assignments can be interpreted in several ways, and indeed some students who responded to an assignment to "explain clearly what school is like" described the physical appearance and the schedule of the school, whereas others wrote what school feels like to them as they experience it, whether they like or dislike it. Several assignments specify a mix of modes by asking students both to describe or explain something and tell how they feel about it.

The assignments clearly set out in whose voice the piece is to be written or it is apparent from the context that it is intended to be the student's own. The intended audience for the writing is far less often mentioned (only about 25 percent of the assignments specify an audience). In making these statements it must be kept in mind that, in the typical classroom in this study, considerable pre-writing activity occurred and teachers were likely to clarify orally aspects of the assignments that were not in the written versions. It is also the case that some oral information about strategies to use in achieving the purpose of the writing was given even though few of the written assignments specify those. Sometimes it is not entirely clear whether language in the written assignment intends to spell out a purpose or a strategy for reaching the purpose.

Construction of a scoring guide appears to demand and result in greater specificity of purpose than does construction of an assignment, although several teachers in the project applied a very general guide which could be adapted to any assignment. When that was done, the scoring categories tended to be (1) little or no achievement of the purpose of the assignment, (2) some achievement of the purpose, (3) good or successful achievement, and (4) inventive and consistent (controlled, systematic, etc.) achievement of purpose. A number of the scoring guides emphasize organization and form as criteria; sometimes quantity of detail or argument or use of a particular type of language differentiates categories. Frequently some specification about "distracting" errors (grammar, mechanics) is added to the content-oriented criteria in the categories.

Three of the 16 scoring guides provided were student-generated. The language in those differs little from that of the teacher-made guides. Teachers viewed student participation in scoring guide construction as a good learning experience and were generally pleased with students' ability to devise criteria and to score their own or peers' papers using the guides. Nearly all guides exhibit some abstract language which admits of subjective judgement on the part of the reader and testifies to the difficulty of formulating criteria in specific terms.

Uses

Teachers participating in the project found several pedagogical purposes for PTS. In this section, we review and discuss them. It should be noted that teachers varied in their willingness to try PTS. On at least two occasions, however, teachers were brought together to share their experiences. It was hoped that such sharing would stimulate interest as well as serving to remind teachers of the support available from the group.

Diagnosis. By "diagnosis" we mean a process which begins with the teacher asking students to write to a specific task. This writing is done early in the school year and is undertaken after a minimum of instruction. Once the samples are written, the teacher analyzes the papers to get a general idea of the students' strengths and weaknesses. Usually, then, this general impression will influence the subsequent planning and delivery of specific lessons.

Three occurrences of PTS for diagnosis were reported among the cooperating teachers. Teacher F used a classic PTS assignment for her class pre-test but then evaluated them holistically. Teacher D, who is a remedial reading specialist, used a PTS assignment as a diagnostic device and then used the student papers as a way of predicting reading difficulties: main ideas, details, spelling, etc.

Teachers in one district decided to use the PTS exercise "Tennis Shoes" as the junior high school district-wide pre-test. Four junior high school teachers from the district, including two of three department chairs and the district language arts coordinator, participated in this study. They persuaded their colleagues to use the PTS exercise as the pre-test which will be filed in each student's writing folder and which will provide a baseline for gauging writing development through junior high.

Formulating assignments. Every teacher in the project reported using PTS to formulate assignments. This use included identifying the purpose of the writing as well as clarifying speaker/subject/audience relationships. One teacher said "PTS works because it helps me to know what I want to do," a statement made in one form or another by almost every participant at some point in the study.

What is less clear is the extent to which thinking about PTS influenced assignments that do not appear to meet PTS criteria. An examination of the assignments made reveals a great variation in the specificity and elaboration contained within the assignments. Some do not clearly indicate a mode or purpose nor do they seem to identify a primary trait. Sometimes the lack of specificity resulted in individuals in the same class writing in different modes.

For example, one class was asked to explain what school is like. Some individuals wrote papers which were clearly explanatory: they described the physical properties of the building and/or detailed chronologically a school day. Other students began writing chronologically, but with the emphasis on their individual day. This seemed to lead naturally to writing about their reactions to individual teachers and courses. Thus, they converted (some might say subverted) the task to an expressive one. This was an ideal opportunity for the teacher to point out the different strategies individuals had used and to show students how they had changed the purpose. Instead, all papers were accepted without comment.

Analyzing students' writing. By this, we mean the use of PTS and the scoring guides to understand what the student wrote and how it might have been improved. This is different from assigning a grade in that it provides specific feedback to the writer about what he did and what he might do to improve his writing. It is an activity which the teacher undertakes in order to understand the writer as much as to understand the writing. Several teachers made use of PTS in this way, commenting "PTS really helps me see if students are able to follow directions and get across the idea they are trying to get across. Flowery language might sound good, but if it doesn't say anything, what use is it?"

Responding to students' writing. This activity is related to analysis of student writing, but goes to the next step: actually delivering feedback. Current writing research has shown the relatively minor value of much of the marginalia teachers often write on students' papers. For some of the teachers in the project, PTS provided a way of response. "PTS scoring is useful for first drafts only, as a tool to improve student writings." This is an important insight. This teacher, as do several others, divides the development of a piece of writing into several stages. The first draft is the draft which verbalizes main ideas, shapes the argument, etc. Therefore, attention to mechanical and grammatical flaws may be counter-productive in the reader's response. PTS, with its emphasis on purpose, audience, and rhetorical situation, provides a way of responding appropriately to the ideas expressed in the first draft. Once purpose and strategy are clarified, subsequent drafts can be used to tighten organization, smooth transition, and correct mechanics.

Evaluation/grading. Given that PTS was originally formulated for evaluating writing, it may seem surprising that few of the participating teachers used it in that way. Partly this phenomenon can be explained by the fact that many teachers in the group do not grade writing since grading may result in a real reduction of children's willingness to write. Other teachers used PTS as part of a grading scheme, but also figured in points for grammatical correctness, mechanics, etc. For these teachers, PTS is too limited to use for generating a grade. However, it is interesting to note that one teacher said that "PTS gives me a better way to explain to parents what the students' grades mean."

Another teacher said that "the distinctions between the four categories are not clear enough to use as a grading tool." This is a curious observation, unless by "clear" the teacher means "comprehensive." It is true that in workshops intended to introduce teachers to PTS the most difficult point for teachers to accept is that a paper filled with spelling errors and "grammar" errors could merit a 4, while a mechanically perfect paper could rate only a 1. While teachers appreciate the perceived "objectivity" of the scoring guide, they are unmoved by its lack of attention to the traditional "knowledge" of English teachers: spelling, grammar, and mechanics.

Peer evaluation. Many of the participating teachers used PTS for peer editing and evaluation. Charles R. Cooper (1977a) describes peer editing as a potentially powerful activity but cautions that students need guidance when functioning in the editor role. This guidance can be furnished, teachers found, by providing students with a copy of the scoring guide to use as a base from which to respond to other students' papers.

Typically, the students are asked to assign a score point from the rating scale to their peer partner's paper and then to justify their award in writing with reference to the score point's definition. This activity does at least three things:

1. It provides another opportunity for each student to examine the purpose and trait in each assignment. As such, it reinforces the student's prior learning in another learning modality.
2. It helps the peer editor learn how to provide feedback which is purposeful and helpful.
3. It creates a genuine need to write, since the response must be written.

A logical followup to this activity was developed by several teachers in the project. Students were invited to create the scoring guides, articulating the differences marked by each score point. This activity could either be done as a pre-writing activity or as a step between the first and second drafts. In either case it helped students discover and correct weaknesses in their own papers.

Improved reading. This use of PTS was a totally unanticipated outcome of the study. One teacher, who is a remedial reading specialist, used PTS to help improve reading. Partly, this is the result of her own emphasis on language experience, wherein children practice reading texts which they have written. Partly, however, this use of PTS may be related to the motivation provided by the actual assignments. The teacher mentions the case of one student who was often absent because of disciplinary problems. Yet, when he was in class, he specifically asked to be allowed to write his story. (Other participating teachers mentioned this same phenomenon: "problem" children asking permission to do the writing activity. While we do not know with certainty, it seems likely that this results from a need for self expression, which is often related to "acting out" behaviors and a desire to engage in a task on which the student will be successful, since PTS does not penalize the student for his/her lack of control of spelling and mechanical conventions.)

The other teacher who cited improved reading was the high school teacher. She observed that her students began to recognize "primary traits" in the texts they read as literary models. Not only were the traits recognized, but students could talk about their use and value in attaining the purpose of the text.

This attention to reading as a result of writing is not new in the research literature. However, the specific use of primary traits to achieve purpose in literature is provocative and deserves further investigation.

Conclusions and Discussion

It is important to remind the reader again of two constraints on our work. First, we worked with only 11 teachers. We made no attempt to construct scientifically a sample of the teacher population. Therefore, the reader must be extremely cautious about generalizing from the experience of these teachers. Second, we tracked the teachers' activities for less than one school term. In one case, the period of teacher/student contact was less than five weeks. In no case was it longer than twelve weeks. Writing skill develops very slowly. For that reason, we do not speculate about change in students' writing skill. Indeed, we made no systematic attempt to collect or analyze students' papers. In only one case did we talk to students about their experience.

Nevertheless, the teachers engaged in this study did find a number of ways to utilize PTS and the principles inherent in it. While these uses have been described above, this section of the report will focus on only a few of these and will offer comments about the implications of PTS.

Teachers in this project substantiated three outcomes of particular significance and helped identify two areas which deserve future attention. First, the three outcomes will be described.

1. PTS helped teachers clarify the purposes of instruction, and helped them to make clearer assignments. Although PTS ostensibly focuses the writer's attention on the purpose to be achieved,

several teachers reported that in planning instruction they found themselves pushed to be more clear. Before they could identify the primary trait, they had to understand the purpose of the writing, and therefore the purpose of instruction. As a result, they planned more carefully and were able to deliver more sharply focused lessons. Moreover, the need to define with distinctness the various score points led to a new objectivity in grading and evaluating since personal preference was replaced with a public, predetermined set of criteria.

2. PTS as an evaluation tool was more useful at some stages of the writing process than at others. None of the teachers who used PTS for evaluation was satisfied with it as a total measure. It is simply not sensitive to many of the factors which, to the teacher, comprise a well-written paper. However, these same teachers were pleased to discover that PTS was extremely helpful at the first-draft stage since it forced them to limit their view of the students' papers. Rather than trying to note all of the paper's faults, the teachers focused only on the degree of attainment of the primary trait. This provided enough information to the student writer to allow significant improvement without overwhelming--and discouraging--the writer.

3. PTS is a valuable device for indirect teaching. When peer editors used the PTS scoring guides to comment on their partner's papers, a second presentation of the instruction was made. However, here the student was not being asked to apply the instruction directly to his own case, but rather, to use the instruction while looking at how another student had solved the same rhetorical problem. This second chance to learn will result in students learning the material more completely, it is felt.

An important unanticipated outcome of the project was the effect of PTS on student reading ability. The relationship between reading and writing is suggested by the research conducted by schema theorists and provides some of the theoretical basis for the language experience approach to reading. Among participating teachers, two mentioned that their students' reading had been positively affected by PTS principles. The relationship deserves attention in further studies designed specifically to determine under what conditions and to what extent the relationship exists.

Not the least of the difficulties which these teachers encountered was that of defining, or discovering a primary trait. While the teachers were quite clear about the three major purposes of writing, they were less able to articulate the trait. Unless this problem could be surmounted, teachers would have been unable to continue with the project. They would have been forced to fall back on the grammar texts, or the pleasurable "activities" they were accustomed to.

In his discussion of identifying kinds of discourse, Lloyd-Jones (1977) points out that he imagines that "most teachers practiced in creating classroom exercises will also create the situations first. Then they can analyze the rhetorical implications, placing the exercise on the model; this will serve as an aid in discovering the features which characterize writing in the prescribed mode" (emphasis added).

In a sense, then, the score point on a paper represents its holistic impression on us. The definition of the point, however, is rendered in qualitative terms which say something about the use of the rhetorical strategy we're interested in: the primary trait. For purposes of informal assessment, rhetorical analysis after the fact is satisfactory for Lloyd-Jones. If, however, we want to convert this to a teaching system, we should define the traits and then devise the exercises.

The value of such an organization is that it would permit development of a curriculum of writing not based on the level of the sentence. It would also separate learning to write, in the best sense, from authentic, child-sponsored writing.

From analysis of teacher logs completed for this project, it is evident that teachers continued to instruct students in traditional English-teacher knowledge. Instruction continued to focus on correct word choice

(affect/effect; it's/its; there/their/they're); on definitions of parts of speech; on organization in writing; and on the avoidance of sentence fragments and run-on sentences. Often this resulted from a similar emphasis in the class text. But it's also the material that teachers know how to teach and that they claim parents want their children to learn. The result, of course, is that by the time the students are in high school they know the term "relative clause" but are unable to define it, even though they use relative clauses competently. By focusing on rhetorical strategies, teachers may be able to shift their attention off the sentence to a richer level. A taxonomy of traits would be required before teachers could abandon their traditional instruction.

Moreover, such a taxonomy could help teachers and students separate for purposes of teaching and learning the two distinct acts of writing and learning to write. Here we must be careful. Such a separation, if pushed too far, would be disastrous for writers. However, the sink or swim approach often seen does not seem to have any lasting effect. Teachers are quite competent to teach strategies for solving communication problems. These strategies can be identified, isolated, taught, and practiced, much the same way that the subskills of reading or mathematics are. Then, when the need for such skill arises, the student is able to evaluate the situation and employ the appropriate rhetorical strategy. This identification of and direct teaching of rhetorical strategies was precisely the method employed by Teacher K with her high school class. Whether it might work for younger writers was not tested. However, the identification of strategies is a necessary first step without which the effort is doomed to fail. The pressure of time and the ready access to a text combine to make such an activity on a teacher's part highly unlikely.

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